

Application No. 09/914,999
Attorney Docket No. PG3619USW

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A dose protector for use in an inhaler comprising a housing defining an airway; a dose of medicament optionally retained in a dose container; and covering means characterised characterized in that said covering means is in biased contact with said dose or container retaining the dose and only opens in response to airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway in a first direction but not in a second, opposite direction.
2. (Currently amended) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the covering means is only open in the presence of airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway in a first direction after which it said covering means returns to its a resting position.
3. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway is caused by patient inhalation.
4. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the said covering means senses airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway and responds thereto.
5. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 4 incorporating electronic means for sensing airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway and/or means of responding thereto.
6. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the covering means responds by covering the dose more effectively when the airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway is in a second direction.
7. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 6 wherein airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway in a second direction is caused by the patient exhaling.

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8. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the covering means comprises one or more poppet valves, diaphragm valves, rotary valves, reciprocating valves, sealing flaps or a combination thereof.
9. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in any claim 1 wherein the dose is metered by volume of medicament or surface area.
10. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 9 wherein the dose is metered by volume into a container.
11. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 10 wherein the said container is a pocket.
12. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the dose or container retaining the dose has a surrounding rim.
13. (Currently amended) A dose protector for use in an inhaler comprising a housing defining an airway; a pocket suitable for containing a dose of medicament; and characterized in that it said housing comprises at least one sealing flap in biased contact with said pocket and providing a cover for the pocket; wherein the contact between the at least one sealing flap and the pocket is broken by airflow through the airway in a first direction but not in a second opposite direction.
14. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 13 wherein the sealing flap is spaced away from the pocket by the airflow once contact with the pocket is broken.
15. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 13 additionally comprising a closure mechanism wherein the at least one sealing flap is held in contact with the pocket by a closure means which prevents the contact between the at least one sealing flap and the pocket being broken by airflow through the airway in any direction.

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16. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 15 wherein the pocket has a surrounding rim.
17. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 13 wherein the said sealing flap vibrates in the airflow once the contact with the pocket is broken.
18. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 13 wherein the sealing flap is made of thermoset rubber.
19. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 13 wherein the sealing flap is of equivalent or slightly reduced width relative to the distance between the inside walls of the housing at the base of the walls of the housing where the sealing flap is in contact with the pocket.
20. (Original) A dose protector as claimed in claim 19 wherein the distance between the inside walls of the housing increases as the distance away from the pocket increases.
21. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the said covering means is spaced away from the dose or container retaining a dose to coincide with the airflow through and/or pressure drop across in the first direction once the contact with the dose or container retaining the dose is broken.
22. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the covering means vibrates in the airflow through and/or pressure drop across the airway in the first direction.
23. (Previously presented) A dose container as claimed in claim 1 wherein the housing contains a valve flap such that when the airflow is in a second opposite direction, the airflow exits the housing by means of the valve flap.

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24. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 wherein the said covering means protects the dose from the patient exhaling into the device, moisture contamination, particulate contamination and loss of the dose or a combination thereof.

25. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1 additionally comprising a fixed seal.

26. (Previously presented) A dose protector as claimed in claim 1, in combination with a dose of medicament.

27. (Previously presented) An inhaler comprising a body, a mouthpiece, and a dose protector as claimed claim 1.

28. (Original) An inhaler as claimed in claim 27 wherein the said inhaler is a dry powder inhaler.

29. (Previously presented) An inhaler as claimed in claim 26 in combination with at least one dose of a medicament.

30. (Previously presented) A method of administering a medicament to a patient comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a patient Use of an inhaler as claimed in claim 27, and
- (b) administering to the patient medicament therefrom by said patient inhaling through said mouthpiece, for the administration of medicament.